

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 6281

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/79

TAGS: MARR/XX/PFOR

SUBJECT: U.S. FORCES ALERT PROCEDURES

REF: (A) STATE 249808; (B) USNATO 5677 EXDIS;
(C) USNATO 5638 EXDIS; (D) USNATO 6011 EXDIS

1. APPROVED PROCEDURES CONTAINED REFTEL (A) WILL HELP TO ASSURE THAT U.S. AMBASSADORS ARE NOTIFIED OF CHANGES IN ALERT/DEFENSE CONDITIONS OF U.S. FORCES. I AM CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT THESE REVISED PROCEDURES MAY NEVERTHELESS CONTAIN BUILT-IN DELAYS WHICH COULD LEAD TO A REPETITION OF THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH RESULTED FROM THE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES USED ON OCTOBER 25.

2. THE BASIC NEED IS OFFICIALLY TO NOTIFY OUR ALLIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON WHOSE TERRITORY U.S. FORCES ARE LOCATED, OF CHANGES IN THE ALERT/DEFENSE CONDITIONS IN U.S. MILITARY FORCES, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND CERTAINLY BEFORE THEY LEARN ABOUT SUCH CHANGES THROUGH THE PUBLIC PRESS OR OTHER UNOFFICIAL MEANS. I BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE NOT ONLY REDUNDANT CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR INFORMING U.S. AMBASSADORS OF CHANGES IN ALERT/DEFENSE CONDITIONS, THERE SHOULD ALSO BE REDUNDANT CHANNELS FOR INFORMING CERTAIN ALLIES.

3. AS RECOMMENDED IN REFTELS (B) AND (C), I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE BEST SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM IS THROUGH DIRECT NOTIFICATION FROM WASHINGTON OVER THE NATO-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

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SYSTEM SIMULTANEOUSLY TO NATO HEADQUARTERS AND TO ALLIED CAPITALS (MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE). AMBASSADORIAL FOLLOW UP WOULD, OF COURSE, BE AN IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL STEP.

4. USE OF THE NATO-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FOR THIS PURPOSE WOULD ELIMINATE POSSIBLE DELAYS DUE TO DIFFICULTY THAT AMBASSADORS MAY HAVE IN REACHING APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS. MOREOVER, USE OF THE NATO-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM WOULD ENABLE THE U.S. TO MEET SECDEF'S COMMITMENT AT DECEMBER 7 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING (PARA 14 A, REFTEL D) THAT ALLIED MINISTERS WOULD BE DIRECTLY INFORMED IN THE EVENT OF A FUTURE U.S. ALERT.

5. THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE SHOULD, OF COURSE, COORDINATE BEFORE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALERT CONDITION OF U.S. FORCES IS TRANSMITTED TO ALLIED GOVERNMENTS.

6. AFTER WASHINGTON HAS DECIDED ON REVISED PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING ALLIES, REQUEST I BE INFORMED OF THE CHANGES SO THAT I CAN BRIEF THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENT IN DPC MINISTERIAL (PARA 14 A, REFTEL D).
RUMSFELD

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION PER S/S-O, MR. FRY, 12/28/73.

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